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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/814,329	04/01/2004	Naoki Yoshida	P21-169535M/ISI	5337

21254 7590 01/30/2007
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EXAMINER

HEWITT, JAMES M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3679

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	01/30/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/814,329	YOSHIDA, NAOKI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	James M. Hewitt	3679	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 October 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>4/1/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of Invention I in the reply filed on 10/31/06 is acknowledged.

Claim 4 is withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Specification

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it is in idiomatic English. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 11, line 4, shouldn't "1a to 1C" be "2A and 2B"?

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-3 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 1, line 4, "other" should be "another".

In claim 1, lines 8-9, the phrase "in airtight" is awkward and unclear.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida (JP 2003-021287) in view of Attwood (US 4,911,406).

With respect to claim 1 and with particular reference to Figures 1-7, Yoshida discloses a piping connector comprising: a socket in a tubular shape attached to an end of one pipe to be connected; a plug in a tubular shape attached to an end of other pipe; a seal ring (36) arranged at an inner periphery of the socket; and a hold ring (adjacent o-ring 36) fixedly attached to the inner periphery of the socket, wherein: the pair of pipes are connected by inserting the plug to fit to the socket; and the hold ring includes a groove (Figure 7) in a ring-like shape. Yoshida fails to explicitly teach that the hold ring is welded to the inner periphery of the socket. Attwood teaches that it is known to weld a hold ring or bushing to the inner periphery of a socket. In view of Attwood's teaching, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to affix Yoshida's hold ring to the inner periphery of the socket via welding in order to permanently secure the hold ring.

With respect to the recitation "...and is welded to the inner periphery of the socket by ultrasonic welding", the method of forming the device is not germane to the

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issue of patentability of the device itself and does not serve to structurally distinguish the claims.

With respect to claim 2, Yoshida as modified by Attwood fails to teach that the portion has a radius of curvature of 0.2 through 0.5mm. Nevertheless, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the portion having a radius of curvature of 0.2 – 0.5mm, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art.

With respect to claim 3, wherein the inner periphery of the socket is provided with a first diameter contracted portion and a second diameter contracted portion from a side of an inserting port of the plug, and a stepped portion is formed between the first diameter contracted portion and the second diameter contracted portion. Refer to Figure 7 for various stepped portions between various diameter portions.

With respect to the recitation “the hold ring is pressed to the first diameter contracted portion to weld”, the method of forming the device is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself and does not serve to structurally distinguish the claims.

Conclusion

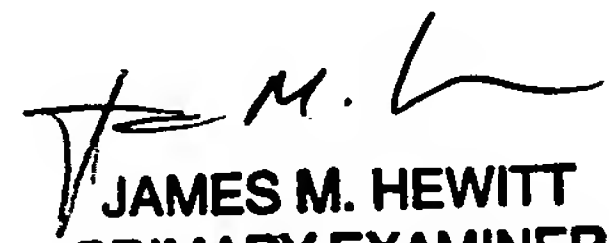
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James M. Hewitt whose telephone number is 571-272-7084.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel Stodola can be reached on 571-272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JMH
1/20/07


JAMES M. HEWITT
PRIMARY EXAMINER